



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1400 South 19th Avenue
Bozeman, MT 59718

March 24, 2015

To: FWP Region 3 EA Standard Distribution List
Richard M. & Marianne K. Morgan, 1374 Clubview Blvd. S., Columbus, OH 43235-1643
Paradise Valley Community Church, 1755 E. River Rd., Livingston, MT 59047-8715
PGP Revocable Trust, Pam Durcell Trustee, Denver, CO 80220-6332
James Patrick Warfield, 3323 Twin Oaks Dr., Napa, CA 94558-5321
Phil and Sonny Ralston, 54289 Highway 43, Wise River, MT 59762
Clyde Thompson, 170 Meadow Road, Divide, MT 59727
Dennis Bacon, 64 Barney Lane, Twin Bridges, MT 59754
Hank Peterson, 1055 Durant Canyon Road, Opportunity, MT 59711
Jean and Keith Rankin, PO Box 28, Anaconda, MT 59711

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The enclosed decision notice has been prepared for the Emigrant Fishing Access Site Proposed Improvement Project, which has been a popular recreational site since Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks (FWP) acquired the 2.69-acres in 1962. The FAS is located along the Yellowstone River 27 miles south of Livingston, Montana. The site provides quality recreational opportunities for fishing, boating, and floating.

Affected by years of heavy use, FWP proposes to renovate the Emigrant FAS by redesigning the parking area and reconditioning the access by redesigning the interior roads.

FWP received one (1) comment regarding the proposed action during the 30-day public comment period; the one comment was more of an inquiry and clarification on the proposal.

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and FWP evaluation, it is my decision to proceed with the proposed action, Alternative B, as described in the Emigrant Fishing Access Site Proposed Improvement Draft Environmental Assessment. This alternative updates and improves existing facilities in the FAS.

Questions regarding this Decision Notice should be directed to:

Ray Heagney
Fishing Access Site Manager
1400 S 19th Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718
406-994-6987
Or emailed to : rheagney@mt.gov

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Sheppard", with a stylized, flowing script.

Sam B. Sheppard
Region Three Supervisor



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

1400 South 19th Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DECISION NOTICE

EMIGRANT FISHING ACCESS SITE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region Three, Bozeman
March 18, 2015**

Proposed Action

In 1962, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) acquired 2.69 acres of land in Park County, Montana, along the Yellowstone River for the purpose of establishing a fishing access site (FAS). FWP proposes to renovate and improve Emigrant FAS by constructing a loop road to improve traffic flow through the parking area, redesigning and improving the parking area, reconditioning the boat ramps, constructing an ADA concrete parking pad, and installing barrier rock.

Montana Environmental Policy Act

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on February 11, 2015.

Public comments on the proposed project were taken from February 11, 2015 through March 17, 2015. The EA was mailed to 63 groups and individuals.

Summary of Public Comment

FWP received one (1) comment regarding the proposed action; the one comment an inquiry for clarification.

Inquiry Comments regarding the proposed project: one (1) total.

Examples of Comment Statements Supporting the Proposal

“What do the magenta spots on the map represent?”

FWP Response: As indicated in the legend, these points indicate existing signs such as Disabled Parking, Rules & Regulations and a bulletin board.

“What does the cyan line through the parking area represent?”

FWP Response: These lines represent the existing parking area within the site, which provide a perspective in comparison to the proposed changes.

“The map shows what looks like barrier rock upstream of the lower boat ramp, but there is no mention of it in the legend or document.” What is that feature on the map?

FWP Response: The structure was originally installed by Montana Department of Transportation at the time the bridge spanning the Yellowstone River downstream was constructed. It prevents the erosion of that area upstream of the bridge. This rock feature is outside the scope of work proposed for the fishing access site and cannot be manipulated in any way.

“Is there a latrine at this site?”

FWP Response: Yes, there is a vault latrine located at the south end of the site. A concrete pad will be installed to provide designated disabled parking and access. The latrine is maintained on a regular basis throughout the summer season and inspected during the winter months.

“Will gravel stay on the boat ramp or get washed off during spring runoff?”

FWP Response: The current slope of the primitive boat launching is less than 8% grade and has remained stable over the course of many years. Adding gravel in accordance to permitting regulations would further harden the stream bank and limit soil erosion and rutting. Like all facilities and homes built within the flood plain they are subject to erosion and sedimentation by the river. The existing boat ramps have required little or no maintenance apart from removal of sediment deposition which is removed under a 310 permit.

No Comment opposing the proposed project.

Decision

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and FWP evaluation, it is my decision to proceed with the proposed action, Alternative B, as described in the Emigrant Fishing Access Site Proposed Improvement Draft Environmental Assessment. This alternative updates and improves existing facilities in the FAS.

Appeal

This project is subject to appeal, which must be submitted to the FWP Director (Mr. Jeff Hagener, Director, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701) in writing and postmarked within 30 days of the date on this decision notice. The appeal must specifically describe the basis for the appeal, explain how the appellant has previously commented to the department or participated in the decision-making process, and lay out how FWP may address the concerns in the appeal. If you have questions regarding this decision notice, please contact Ray Heagney, Fishing Access Site Manager at 406-994-6987.



Sam B. Sheppard
Region Three Supervisor
